

LA County Probation Grant Challenge Grant II Program Evaluation Survey

This survey will become part of your county's Challenge II contract with the Board of Corrections. For purposes of this survey:

- “Program” refers to a defined set of interventions that will be given to a specified research sample in order to evaluate well-stated hypotheses.
- “Research Design” refers to the procedures you will use to test the stated hypotheses for your Program. In some instances you will have more than one Research Design for a Program, in which case a separate survey must be completed for each Research Design.
- “Project” refers to all the work that you propose to do with Challenge Grant II. For example, if you have two Programs and two Research Designs for each Program, the entire effort would constitute your Project (and you would complete four surveys).

To simplify the task of completing this survey, we refer you to several sources; 1) the initial Research Design Summary Form, 2) your Program’s responses to the technical compliance issues identified during the grant review, and 3) the Request for Additional Information form distributed at the Challenge II Evaluators Meeting on June 23, 1999. If no additional information was requested of a particular item on the Research Design Summary Form, enter the original text into the appropriate space below. If more information was requested, provide a more complete response. In either case, please provide the additional information requested by any follow-up question.

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2. **Program Name:** The Los Angeles County’s Challenge Grant II program is called Youth/Family Accountability Model or YFAM.
3. **Treatment Interventions:** YFAM will target home on probation (HOP) cases with two or more prior probation referrals that have been assigned for supervision in seven selected areas in L.A. County. Qualified cases will be randomly assigned to either a treatment or a control group. The control group will be assigned to current supervision caseloads averaging 150 and will receive the standard probation services. The treatment group will be assigned to reduced caseloads of 75 and will receive intensive probation supervision.

Minors in both groups will be assessed for risk and needs, but only the treatment cases will receive the full menu of YFAM services based on the assessment’s results. The services to be provided to the treatment cases will be family-focused, community-based and designed to last for approximately 12 months. The services will range from

tutorial/literacy program to psychological counseling and to job/employment training. Most of the planned services will be provided at the community resource center where minors in the treatment group will report after school during weekdays and where attendance will be mandatory.

In addition, effective restitution, community service and special programs, such as JAWS, will be available for minors to achieve compliance with probation conditions. Graduated sanctions will be implemented to ensure community protection and advance individual accountability through a continuum of sanctions.

A case manager will monitor attendance, activity participation and program services provided to the treatment cases.

- 3(a). The table below contains an exhaustive list of interventions that might be part of your Program. Use the appropriate number to distinguish the recipients, if any, of each of these interventions. If a particular intervention will not be part of your Program, please write a "0" in the box.

"1" - Treatment group only

"2" - Both groups with differences in specific intervention

"3" = Both groups with no differences in specific intervention

"4" = Comparison Group Only

3	Multi-disciplinary assessment to identify needs/plan interventions	1	Single point of entry/one-stop service center
1	Day Reporting Center	1	Multidisciplinary case management
1	Community Resource/Service Center	0	Restorative Justice Program
0	Neighborhood based prevention activities	2	Victim mediation/restoration
0	Teen Court	2	Institutional commitment
0	Neighborhood Accountability Boards	0	Transitional care
0	Victim advocacy	0	Voice tracking
0	On-site school	0	Community-oriented problem solving
1	Homework assistance	0	Reconciliation
1	Language proficiency development	0	Rigorous academic program
2	Monitor truancy through contact with schools	2	Tutoring
0	Probation officers on site: Prevention	0	ESL instruction
1	Probation officers on site: Intervention	1	Educational incentives
2	Social skills development	1	Mentoring
2	Life skills counseling	0	Life skills training
0	Youth leadership development	1	Swift and certain response
0	Parenting training - for youth	0	Emancipation skills training
2	Mental health counseling	2	Parenting training - for parents of youth
2	Family counseling	2	Sexual abuse counseling
2	Family counseling with involvement of extended family	2	Parenting counseling
0	Family conferencing	0	Parental prosecution
0	Family re-unification	0	Create multi-family support groups
0	Respite care	3	CPS referral
0	Family mentors	0	Medical services
0	Peer counseling	0	Physical therapy
2	Health education	2	Conflict resolution services
2	Conflict resolution training	0	Financial support
2	Anger management	0	Residential care
0	Finance management training	1	Clothing
0	Housing and food	0	Use of probation volunteers

1	Expedited case assignment and management	2	Vocational counseling
0	Community based restorative justice	2	Employment
2	Vocational training	0	Community service – paid
0	Job placement	2	Community service – unpaid
2	Pay restitution	1	Transportation
1	Intensive probation supervision	0	Behavioral contract
4	Probation supervision, not intensive	0	Speech therapy
1	Recreation activities	0	Outreach workers
1	After school programs	1	Other (Specify): Emerg. Psych. Hospitalization
2	Crisis intervention	1	Other (Specify): Substance Detox
0	Electronic monitoring		Other (Specify):
2	Alcohol abuse counseling and support		Other (Specify):
2	Substance abuse counseling and support		Other (Specify):
1	Increase PO contact with other community agencies serving the family/youth (e.g., schools, mental health)		Other (Specify):

4. **Research Design:** The project will utilize a true experimental design. Minors from the seven selected areas will be pre-qualified for program admission on the basis of court order - HOP, age - 17.5 years or younger, and number of prior referrals – 2 or more probation referrals. An area office SDPO will handle the initial screening.

The name of a qualified minor will be called in to the program evaluator who will make the assignment to either treatment or control group based on a series of computer generated random numbers or random protocol. Due to the utilization of the random assignment procedure and the large number of HOP minors who will be involved in the process, it is anticipated that the two groups will have comparable background characteristics. Each area will have separate random protocols prepared for girls, early onset boys, and later onset boys to further bolster initial random equivalence.

- 4a. Check (✓) the statement below that best describes your Research Design. If you find that you need to check more than one statement (e.g., True experimental and Quasi-experimental), you are using more than one Research Design and will need to complete a separate copy of the survey for the other design(s). Also, check the statements that describe the comparisons you will be making as part of your Research Design.

Research Design (Check One)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	True experimental with random assignment to treatment and comparison groups
<input type="checkbox"/>	Quasi-experimental with matched contemporaneous groups (treatment and comparison)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Quasi-experimental with matched historical group
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (Specify)
Comparisons (Check all that apply)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Post-Program, Single Assessment
<input type="checkbox"/>	Post-Program, Repeated Assessments (e.g., 6 and 12 months after program separation)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Pre-Post Assessment with Single Post-Program Assessment
<input type="checkbox"/>	Pre-Post Assessment with Repeated Post-Program Assessments (e.g., 6 and 12 months after program separation)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (Specify)

- 4b. **Historical Comparison Group:** Not Applicable.

5. **Cost/Benefit Analysis:** This type of analysis is not easy to do because it is difficult to fix costs for all variables that can be factored in the calculation. However, a basic cost-benefit analysis will be conducted as part of the evaluation process. The cost comparison will consist of two parts. The first part is a straight comparison of costs of supervision and social services afforded to the experimental group (YFAM youngsters) and the control group (routine HOP caseloads). An analysis of this type is necessary to clarify the cost components within each supervision model. Major

items for the analysis include Probation supervision cost, standard social services cost, specialized individual/group services, and routine and special counseling and education services. Detailed cost items will need to be worked out in collaboration with the Probation, the participating service agencies, and the evaluation team.

Second, analysis of potential cost savings based on the number of minors who could have and may have been diverted from out-of-home placement and the resulting dollar savings. Such a comparison can be made based on the number of minors from each type of supervision plan who have been removed from home into another type of supervision. We know that a camp stay of a year will cost approximately \$38,400 more, whereas out-of-home placement costs are even higher at \$49,200 per year over a regular HOP case. Although it may be hard to put a dollar figure on a crime that has been committed, comparative analysis of direct and implied institutional costs associated with dealing with a delinquent should be possible.

Cost/Benefit Analysis			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No

6. **Target Population:** The program will target the under-served segment of moderate to high risk home on probation (HOP) cases from seven selected areas in the county. Participants in the program will include both males and females of all ethnic/racial background, under the age of 17.5 years, who have at least two or more prior referrals to probation, and ordered to HOP during the planned intake period of 12 months starting from the program's implementation date.
- 6a. **Determination of Eligibility:** Identification will be based on the court's minute order to HOP supervision (with no other special program assignment) and on the minor's age and probation record maintained in a minor's case file. All HOP cases with two prior referrals in the seven areas that are not assigned to some alternative special program and meet the age requirements will be eligible.
7. **Sample Size:** Department of Probation projections suggest that a total of 2,160 HOP cases will be eligible and randomly assigned to the two study groups over 12 months. At this time, the department estimates a 20% "failure" rate in the YFAM group and a 25% failure rate in the Control group at the end of the 12 month program. Minors are prohibited from leaving the county while on probation without notifying their DPO. Most who move remain in the county. For this reason, we estimate losing only 5% of each group. "Failure" (discussed in #21 and #23) is defined as re-arrest, placement out of the home or current suitable placement, or exclusion from program (after repeated attempts to gain compliance – most of which will result in one of the previous actions).

	Total YFAM	YFAM "completed"	YFAM "failure"	YFAM "lost"	Total CONTROL	Control "completed"	Control "failure"	Control "lost"
Over 12 months intake	1080	810	216	54	1080	756	270	54

8. **Key Dates:** The following are tentative dates related to the program's milestones:
 - Program Operational Date: January 1, 2000
 - Final Treatment Completion Date for inclusion in BOC report: December 31, 2001
 - Final Data Gathering Date: August, 2002
9. **Matching Criteria:** A great deal of information will be available to check the comparability between the treatment and control groups. First, the groups will be compared on gender and average age of first arrest within each of the seven areas. The groups should be very similar on these variables because they will be used as blocking variables in the random assignment process. Next, the average number of prior probation referrals, age and ethnicity will be compared. Across all seven areas, these should be equivalent for the overall treatment and control groups. Finally, more detailed comparisons will examine the groups for similar patterns of needs and risks at intake, and similar probation histories.

- 9a. **Measurement of Matching Criteria:** Variables used to check the equivalence of the treatment and control groups at intake will be measured as follows:

gender – coded from probation case file

age of first arrest – coded from probation case file

number of prior probation referrals – coded from probation case files

age – coded from probation case files (chronological age as of the court disposition date)

ethnicity – coded from probation case files (self-identified ethnicity will be used)

selected intake risks and needs – measured at intake using a risk and needs assessment instrument adapted for this purpose.

prior probation history – types of problems that led to earlier probation referrals, prior treatments assigned, prior compliance with terms of probation, prior exposure to restitution, community service, and detox programs, prior sanctions imposed as a result of violation of probation are among the variables that will be coded from the probation files and used to compare the treatment and control groups.

- 9b. **Unequal Distribution on Certain Characteristics:** Unequal distributions between the two groups based on the matching criteria are not anticipated due to the application of the random assignment and also because of the large sample size involved in the study. If the groups differ on these characteristics, two approaches will be taken. One is to identify major subgroups where the treatment and control groups are equivalent (e.g. in some areas and not in others/ or for some age groups and not others, etc.) and proceed with t-tests and ANOVAs to test for treatment impacts in these subgroups. A fall-back option would be to switch to using statistical control methods (though imperfect) such as using key confounded variables as covariates in regression analyses and test for program effects on outcomes that are independent of these confounds.

- 9c. **Historical Comparison Group:** Not Applicable.

10. **Comparison Group:** True Experimental Design

11. **Assessment Process:** The evaluation team and the Probation Department project management team are in the process of reviewing several risk and needs assessment instruments used elsewhere. Components of prior instruments will be adapted for use in this project.

The assessment process, which is still being developed, will be satisfactory to the Los Angeles Challenge II Project Manager, the project research team, and the Board of Corrections staff, and will be the subject of a confirming letter from the Board of Corrections upon mutual agreement.

The assessment of the treatment cases and control cases will be conducted in the same way by the same entity within the seven areas (either a designated probation officer or a designated CBO staff person) trained and supported by the evaluation team. Assessments will immediately precede random assignment to condition. Assignment will be contingent on the completion of the assessments, but blind to the assessment elements or conclusions.

- 11a. **Description of the Assessment Instrument for the Treatment Group:** It is our intention to adopt an assessment instrument that will evaluate a range of problems a juvenile is experiencing with the family, at school and in the community. The assessment will address the areas of engagement and performance at school, substance use and abuse, high-risk behaviors, physical and mental health conditions, family relations, peer associations, and self-esteem.

- 11b. **Description of the Assessment Instrument for the Comparison Group:** The same assessment instrument will be used for both treatment and comparison groups.

12. **Treatment Group Eligibility:** Promptly after the court minute order assigning an eligible minor to HOP, the CRC DPO or other designated person will schedule a meeting with each minor and his or her parent. At this meeting, the risk and needs assessment will be conducted, and the nature of the programs discussed. The name (and other identifying information), age of first arrest, gender, current age, ethnicity, and number of prior probation referrals will be faxed to the USC evaluation team. These data will be entered and checked against previous assignments. New cases will be randomly assigned by consulting previously constructed random protocols (for girls, boys with first

arrest at age 12 or younger, boys with first arrest at age 13 or older) for each probation area. Apparent duplicate cases will be investigated and maintained in the same condition initially assigned. Assignments will be communicated to the area supervising DPO who will promptly notify the minors of their program assignment.

13. **Comparison Group Eligibility:** Same procedure as in #12.

13a. Not applicable.

Variable	Score/Scale	Additional Information	Significance Test
successful completion of instant probation term	yes/no (defined as youth not being removed from home or other suitable placement)		χ^2
completion of community service	yes/no defined as completion of court ordered hours		χ^2
successful completion or on time payment of restitution	yes/ no (defined as payment in full or in compliance with payment plan)		χ^2
regular school attendance	Number of unexcused absences		F or t-test
lack of school disciplinary actions	number of suspensions, expulsions, or school disciplinary referrals		F or t-test
lack of sustained petitions	Number of sustained petitions filed		F or t-test
parent/guardian satisfaction with the program	Satisfaction on a scale included on a parent survey given to a sample of parents		F or t-test
total arrests during 12 months of program	arrests counted in the juvenile automated index covering 12 months during the program		F or t-test
continued in home placement 6 months post-program	(yes/no) youth removed from home or other suitable placement over six months post program		χ^2
total arrests 6 months post-program	arrests counted in the juvenile automated index covering 6 months post program		F or t-test
time to first arrest 6 months post program	time to first arrest counted in the juvenile automated index covering 6 months post program		F or t-test

14. **Outcome Variables:** Outcomes will be measured at program termination and again six months post program. The first seven outcomes listed in the table above will be measured at program termination. The DPO monitoring the treatment minors will be asked to complete a report for this study that gives the information needed to code these outcomes. The parent satisfaction outcome will be based on a survey given to a random sample of treatment and control parents in the final months of the program. The DPO monitoring the control minor will provide a Progress Report or Disposition Report which will provide information as to minor's compliance with conditions of probation supervision and provide information regarding the above outcome measures.

The last four outcomes listed will be measured for the 12-month program period as well as for the 6 months post program period. These official outcomes will be coded from the juvenile automated index (JAI).

15. **Score/Scale:** The outcomes listed in the table above will be measured as indicated in the second column.

16. **Additional Information:** The outcomes listed will be compared for the complete intake groups (as close as possible minus an estimated 5% loss) that were originally assigned to conditions. In addition we will make many follow-up comparisons within breakdowns by geographic area, by selected risk or need factors, by personal characteristics like age and ethnicity as well as by implementation differences that we observe in our qualitative implementation observations.

17. **Significance Test:** The following statistical tests will be utilized depending on the nature of the data involved in the analysis:

t-tests – for continuous variables, e.g., arrests
 chi square test – for categorical variables, e.g., successful completion of probation
 ANOVA – (may be used for continuous or ordinal data) to test the differences in performance outcomes among the identified subgroups.

- 14a. The table below contains an exhaustive list of the outcomes for which hypotheses have been developed by different Challenge II Programs. In the column to the left, check (✓) those outcomes that will be evaluated as part of your research design. For each such item, check the boxes to the right if you will also be collecting data for this variable for the period preceding program entry (Pre-Program) and/or for the period during program participation (During Program).

The first nine outcomes checked will be measured at program termination as well as six months later. The rest of the outcomes checked will be measured at program termination only. We have checked outcomes for which hypotheses have been developed for the YFAM program.

✓ Here if Applicable	Outcome	✓ Here if Data Will Also be Collected for Conduct/Status Prior to or During Program		Follow-up
		Pre-Program	During Program	
	Risk Factors			
	Time to Complete Risk Assessment			
X	Arrest/Referral (any)	X	X	X
X	# of Arrests/Referrals	X	X	X
X	Type(s) of Arrest(s)/Referral(s)	X	X	X
X	Petitions Filed (any)	X	X	X
X	Sustained Petitions (any)	X	X	X
X	# of Sustained Petitions	X	X	X
X	Type(s) of Sustained Petition(s)	X	X	X
	Adult Convictions (any)			
	# of Adult Convictions			
	Type(s) of Adult Convictions			
X	Institutional Commitment (any)	X	X	X
X	# of Institutional Commitments	X	X	X
	Commitment Time			
	Completion of Institutional Commitment			
	Restitution Ordered			
	Restitution Amount			
X	Restitution Paid		X	
X	Amount of Restitution Paid		X	
	Court-Ordered Work			
	Court-Ordered Work Hours			
	Court-Ordered Work Completed			
	# of Court-Ordered Work Hours Completed			
	Court-Ordered Community Service			
	Court-Ordered Community Service Hours			
X	Court-Ordered Community Service Completed		X	
X	# of Court-Ordered Community Service Hours Completed		X	
X	Education-Enrollment Status	X	X	
X	Education-Grade Level	X	X	
	Education-Credits Earned			
	Education-Grade Point Average			

✓ Here if Applicable	Outcome	✓ Here if Data Will Also be Collected for Conduct/Status Prior to or During Program		Follow-up
		Pre-Program	During Program	
X	Education-Expulsions	X	X	
X	Education-Suspensions	X	X	
	Gang Involvement			
	Alcohol Use			
	Drug Use			
	Runaway			
X	Wardship Status	X	X	
	Informal Probation Status			
	Contacts with Probation Officer			
	Family Functioning			
	Self Esteem			
	Use of Community Services			
	Self-Protective/Avoidance Behavior			
X	Client Satisfaction		X	
	Family Attitudes			
	Social Skills			
	Pregnancy/Child Birth Rate			
	Perceived Control Over Life			
	Community Attachment – Sense of Membership			
	Time to Initiate Supervision			
	Referrals to Community Agencies			
X	Other: Regular school attendance		X	
	Other (Specify):			
	Other (Specify):			
	Other (Specify):			
	Other (Specify):			

The following questions are supplemental to the Research Design Summary Form and will help us understand how you intend to manage data collected for this project.

18. **Additional Background Information:** The following background information may be collected:

The intake assessments will include information about family backgrounds, peer associations, & alcohol and drug use.

19. **Process Evaluation:** The process evaluation will examine the effect of the activities/inputs of the program in relation to program outcomes within the YFAM groups. Data for the process evaluation will be collected monthly from each CBO hosting a community resource center (CRC). The program implementation measures that the CBO's are asked to report to the evaluation team includes: daily CRC attendance; number of DPO contacts, number referrals to services; number of treatment sessions scheduled for youth and families; number of treatment sessions attended by youth and families; number of violations processed; number of drug tests completed; number of short-term residential psychiatric stays; number of short term detoxification stays; and number of graduated sanctions/accountability interventions dispensed.

Process related data will be collected for the duration of the program. In addition to the monthly reports sent to the evaluators, an evaluator will visit the sites on a rotating schedule. The everyday operations of the CRC, aspects of program implementation and program management, the referral process, and evidence of multi-agency collaboration will be observed.

20. **Documentation of Services:** Therapeutic treatment services and probation case management services provided to the treatment group will be documented in one case file for each minor. These files will be maintained at the area offices. Alternatively, probation services and court-ordered treatment services administered to control group youth will be

recorded in the probation officer's case file, which will be housed at the area offices. Data collection forms will be filed monthly by each individual/agency dispensing services to the treatment group minors. The data collection forms will indicate the various services received, frequency of attendance, length of time spent per service, referrals to outside services, and if each service was completed. The forms will include a record of graduated sanctions imposed. At termination, the probation officers monitoring each treatment minor will complete a termination form that will document their activities with the juvenile and family, any referrals made for the juvenile and family, follow-through on referrals by juveniles and family, total number of in person and phone contacts with each juvenile and family, sanctions imposed, the status of each court-ordered element of the child's probation term, basic school information including number of unexcused absences, school disciplinary actions taken including referrals, suspensions, and expulsions. The termination form will also collect official outcomes including type and number of petitions and violation filed, arrests, and alternative placements.

21. **Program Completion Criteria:** YFAM and control minors are both placed home on probation supervision with a one year continuance date and the date of their HOP order is the date of entrance into their respective program. For most minors, they will complete their program when they have remained in the program for 12 months. For those minors whose probation terminates before the 12 months has lapsed, they will complete the program when their probation ends irrespective of the amount of time they have spent in the program.
22. **Program Completion Linked to Probation Terms:** Completing the program does not require completing probation. Minors may leave the YFAM program, including the experimental and control groups, without having completed probation. However, if a minor's probation terminates before they have completed 12 months in the program, the end of probation will signal the end of their program.
23. **Unfavorable Program Termination:** Minors will be terminated from YFAM or HOP if they: 1) are committed to any type of out-of-home placement (including camps, CYA, adult facility, other out-of-home placements), 2) grossly violate CRC rules despite the use of graduated sanctions to correct their non-compliant behavior, or 3) move out of the county. In this case, follow-up data collection will be attempted.